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CALENDAR. — The seventy-fifth year began September 30, 1908, and will close May 26, 1909.

Address inquiries to the DEAN.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN—AN INTERPRETATION.

"Mr. President and Gentlemen of the Senate of the State of New Jersey:* May I be pardoned if, upon this occasion, I mention that away back in my childhood, the earliest days of my being able to read, I got hold of a small book . . . Weems' "Life of Washington." I remember all the accounts there given of the battlefields and struggles for liberties of the country . . . I recollect thinking then, boy even though I was, that there must have been something more than common that these men struggled for. I am exceedingly anxious that that thing—that something even more than national independence; that something that held out a great promise to all the people of the world to all time to come—I am exceedingly anxious that this Union, the Constitution, and the liberties of the people shall be perpetuated in accordance with the original idea for which that struggle was made, and I shall be most happy indeed if I shall be a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty, and of this, His most chosen people, for perpetuating the object of that great struggle."

There spoke the child of nature, the unschooled lad of the primeval gazing longingly for the first time down the great avenue of human quest and hope, the honest toiler, the soldier, the eager, searching, pondering student, the lawyer, the legislator, the trained reasoner and finished scholar in nature, history, law and government, the foremost statesman of the age, a moral king.

Could we but feel as in his blood all the essence of human life distilled! Could we but see as from his summit of vision the purpose and meaning of the past, and the vast hope of the future! There was lofty conception, profound intuition, a unifying range of sense and vision that comprehended the story of man from the cradle of the race to the "great promise to all the people of the

* From Lincoln's address at Trenton Feb. 21, 1861.

world, to all time to come." The meaning of the past lay solvent in his mind. The future was before him. He stood for "the last hope of earth," for "millions yet to be." In his grasp of universal meanings, purposes and ends, he was above time, akin to eternity, immortal.

Could we comprehend the meaning of the past, the hope of the future, we might see, in the dawn of history, the early guardians of our human hope, departing from the over-crowded ancestral home-land, bearing the seeds and elements of future civilization, pressed onward to the plains of Western Asia, to the Land of Promise, to the Valley of the Nile, and onward to the Graeco-Roman World, or over the Asian wastes beyond the great rivers and mountains of the vague northern confines, where the unawakened hosts of primitive freemen grew; through all their migrations and habitations, dramatic crises, tragic victories, transforming campaigns, the rise and fall of kingdoms and empires, there runs the epic of freedom.

Within the Caucasian race, modern civilization arises from the blending of three historic elements, the Hebrew, the Graeco-Roman, and the Teutonic. The Land of Promise was the high-way and meeting place of the great nations of antiquity. True to the eternal covenant, into the Chosen Race was poured all the lasting wealth of the Ancient East, and her genius was crowned with the living essence of the highest good. But at what a cost was born the blessing to the nations! Her disintegrating masses were scattered and lost in the oblivion of bondage, her rights were forfeited, and her unfaithful remnant rejected the Prince of Peace. Across the sea, Greece had attained the heights in her realm, but the loftiest reach of her mind was a confession of inability to navigate the sea of life alone without some guide sent from God. Rome arose as the organizer, the law-giver, the conqueror and the temporal unifier. Into the coffers of her temples were gathered the hoarded spoils of the ages. But her ancient gods had departed and with them her youth, moral integrity, and power of growth. Her whole being was intoxicated with martial power, her eyes blinded by the blood of battles, her ears deafened by the din of the gory amphitheatre, all her senses deadened with an insane profusion of licentious

luxury. Her soul was sick of the rhetorical philosophy, cynical sophistry and servile sorcery of degenerate impostors. After exhausting all the ways of flesh, she had turned away, hopelessly wrecked and gloomily despondent, from the Old World's almost unconscious quest, "Oh that I knew where I might find Him." Rome could not sense, could not hear or see when the answer to the quest of all the ages came to men — the Way, the Truth and the Light. But a vast, dumb hunger and thirst was calling, waiting for the messengers of the new freedom.

With living need, power of assimilation, capacity for growth, moral integrity and eager enthusiasm the primitive hosts of freemen flooded the dying empire. At the meeting of these mighty torrents, the abyss of destruction seemed to yawn in one vast whirlpool to oblivion. But the elements had found their own. Beyond the mingling a mighty stream flowed westward. And the troubled world took hope.

When, lo! in the remote Eastern deserts a great wave is seen, rising, spreading, deluging, blotting out the ancient nations. "The Crescent, lying in a vast semicircle upon the northern shore of Africa, and the curving coast of Asia, with one horn touching the Bosphorus and the other Gibraltar, seemed about to round to the full and overspread all Europe." In the East the aged Graeco-Roman Power, in a last heroic stand, fulfilled its mission. In the West, the future guardians of freedom, unified in knightly honor by the bonds of their sacred charge, rolled back the bloody, frenzied tide.

The commonwealth of humanity delivered from foes without gave promise of large progress within. Led by the great Teutonic knight, a warrior, reformer, educator, statesman, churchman, the vision of Israel seemed about to dawn. But the free, plastic, unschooled Teutons flowed into the deserted molds of the ancient world. Aristocracies, monarchies and empires were cast. The Church, deserting her true mission, and corporating in the form of the Roman Empire, assumed the ambition to become the temporal ruler of the world. The Papacy and the Empire combined to shackle freedom. The perverted turmoil and the ominous gloom of the Dark Ages were the inevitable result.

The Norman and Saxon freemen combine against a tyrant king, and seal Magna Charta, that sacred pledge of the ancient English civil rights — life, liberty and property. In Germany an honest, intelligent monk is driven to the proclamation and demand for spiritual freedom. And the doom of the Dark Ages breaks in the storm of inquisition, rebellion and revolution.

Far over the seas, on the western horizon, away from greed and strife, a new continent of generous peace and plenty beckoned. On this last mountain of hope, the ark of freedom, bearing the lasting wealth, the selected fruit of the ages, sought a peaceful resting place. The seeds of liberty were sown in the new land. They took deep root and spread over the vast environs of the new home of freedom. A nation of freemen grew.

From the earliest records of the sacred Epic of Freedom the latest guardians drew the form of their first government. To insure "the right use of their liberty," the Pilgrim Fathers "solemnly and mutually, in the presence of God and one of another, covenant and combine ourselves together into a civil body politick, for our better ordering and preservation and furtherance of the ends aforesaid." There were freemen drawn together for one great end, united in soul and purpose, sealing their bonds in mutual faith and faithfulness with mutual promises, and with no authority for enforcement, save that inherent in the true faithful nature of each — a form from the mold of the Eternal Covenant. Into this form the Colonies grew toward union — the Connecticut Constitution, the New England Confederacy, the Continental Congress. The spirit of freedom had found her own, and already the outlines of her embryo form were appearing.

Beautiful and splendid was her growth. But the eyes of a greedy, licentious and brutal king fell upon her. A long train of abuses of the fundamental human rights followed. Petitions, protests, declarations and appeals were in vain. Government under a despotic king had become destructive of the ends for which governments are instituted. "The laws of nature and of nature's God" entitled the Fathers of the Country to dissolve the bond and to institute a new government deriving its just powers from the consent of the governed. These "self evident

truths" and "unalienable rights" were the foundations of the Declaration of Independence, "and for the support of this Declaration with a firm reliance on the Protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor." Lexington and Concord, Bunker Hill — Yorktown, the blood of the Revolution was the price of these rights.

In the fulness of time the Child of the Ages was born into the family of nations. Conceived of Christian parentage in the ark of civil and religious freedom, she embodied in her being the best elements of the world. The altars of freedom again were raised, that her worship might be in spirit and in truth. From all that was good she drew her form and nourishment.

The Fathers of the Country, true to the mutual pledge of their lives, fortunes and honor, had supported the Declaration through to Independence. Life, Liberty and Property were theirs. How should thirteen colonies live together to preserve and perpetuate that for which they had paid so dearly? From the very nature of man, harmonious relations could not survive in anarchy. Laws must be enunciated and a government instituted. As free-men, what voluntary relations, what form of association should they assume?

The wrecks of the ages were their warning. From all the wisdom and experience of past human life they might select. From the wisdom of the Ancient East, from the treasured wealth of the Hebrews, from Greece, from the Jurisprudence of Rome, the Mediæval Municipalities, the Teutonic representative systems, the experience and social forms of England and her colonies — from the decree and act of God creating all men free and equal, to their own patriotic hearts that beat in response to God's purpose, they drew their philosophy of life, their system of national ethics, the vital principles of their government. Back to the very fountain heads of nature, and of personal relations, they went, that their way might be true. Then we see them following as if by Divine guidance, that path which primitive man, seeking his way through social relations in the morning of history, discovered and blazed through the vast realm of religion, ethics and jurisprudence. It was followed by the an-

cient Chaldæans, Babylonians and Semites, the great way of the Hebrews, extended to Greece, perfected in her communication with all the world by Rome. It has become the great, broad, fixed highway of civilized humanity, the fundamental principle of civil law, from the silent understanding involved in the purchase of a loaf of bread, to the Law of Nations; from the Mayflower Compact, to the Constitution of the United States; from the marriage vows, to the Covenant between God and Abraham. Naturally, historically, the covenant relation appears as that inherent principle in the nature and inevitable life association of free persons, through which they may realize perfect relations in their God-given environment.

Delicate, sacred as a marriage of love, truth, faith, love were required of the persons in a perfect covenant relation. Falseness, faithlessness, greed, bore the doom of mutual suffering and alienation, or else voluntary sharing in the doomed suffering from evil, by the true and faithful one who would not break the covenant. The story of the Eternal Covenant, the sin, the suffering, the price of blood, they knew. And yet solemnly, courageously, naturally, almost inevitably, for the spirit of freedom had already manifested the form she would assume, that sacred covenant relation is entered when "the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice . . . and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America." A nation of freemen had found a perfect form of government.

But with the seeds of liberty in the land, the enemy had sown tares. The greed, the curse that had confounded the Old World, had followed to the New. "This trade of importing slaves is dark gloominess hanging over the land," wrote a Quaker in 1745. The Virginia Legislature appealed to the King in 1771: "This trade in slaves is of great inhumanity . . . opposed to our security and happiness . . . a danger to our very existence." "The laws of Impartial Providence may avenge our injustice upon our posterity," wrote Mason to the Virginia Legislature. Washington liberated his slaves. Jefferson branded the slave trade as piracy, and fixed in the Declaration of Independence, that all men

are created equal, with an unalienable right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

But the subtle foes of freedom forced into the Constitution, provisions for the legal rights of slavery. One great demand in a covenant relation, in the Kingdom of God, is service — service, not slavery.

From the days when the Cimbri and the Teutons, retreating before the murderous Mongol hordes, appealed to Rome for lands, animally, bodily, almost unconsciously at first, the Teutonic race has lived the demand for the fundamental rights of life, liberty, and property — life, God-given, liberty, God-purposed, property, an environment in which to maintain life and realize liberty.

In slavery the rights of life, liberty, and property were perverted and antagonized. Life, through the destruction of liberty, became property. Morally, naturally, logically, historically and legally slavery was an anomaly, a self contradiction. Right and wrong are “two principles that have stood face to face from the beginning of time, and will ever continue to struggle. No man can say that you have a right to do wrong.” Magna Charta, the Mayflower Compact, the New England Confederacy, the Declaration of Rights, the Declaration of Independence are records of the struggle for freedom. Slavery is a violation of the fundamental principles of all civil law, and logically can have no legal rights. The Fathers of the Country knew that slavery was wrong, but they yielded in a critical hour for the sake of harmony. They did not know that right could not compromise with wrong. Great principles were set in battle array by men, and men must pay the cost.

The men of the Revolution passed away. A new generation came on. Their hearts were perverted by greed, and their eyes were blinded by the lustre of gold. Slavery was seen “through the thick coating of two billions of dollars.” Slavery is a blessing ordained of God, they said. Their logic, their philosophy, their theology, followed to serve in welding the bonds of the slave. Liberty — Equality — Democracy — Slavery. Was it only an error, inconsistent, self-contradictory? Slavery was the lie of the nation. The house was divided against itself. In the

halls of the new home of freedom sounds of strife arose, brothers exchanging angry speech across the family board, whispering, plotting, trouble, doom in all the chambers. There was no peace. Compromise failed. The house was divided against itself by the inherent evil of slavery.

The Lincolns were of the family. From England, to Massachusetts, to Pennsylvania, to Virginia they came, and then westward; living, experiencing, absorbing, embodying it all. Thankful would we be for a picture of the mother who gave us Lincoln. But she passes on; and we see a tall awkward lad sitting alone on a mother's grave in the great western wilderness, as the gloom of the first dark night comes down—and the empty, lonely days that followed when that sad, far-away look stole into his eyes. She of whom he said: "All that I am, or hope to be, I owe to my Angel Mother," gone so early, and he alone, "gazing down the great avenue of human quest and hope." Again we see him drifting down the great river that flows southward, where a race toils in bondage; at an auction where dark-skinned human beings are sold and led away in chains; always searching, pondering, vowing, struggling upward. Then the echoes of a bloody struggle from the western plains, and the faint rumblings of a coming eruption trouble the whole atmosphere.

A world mission called to the unfathomed depths of that un-found potential life. The appeal of humanity for its fundamental rights is urgent. Duty becomes a passion. All the authority of God's purpose, sleeping in the hearts of freemen, gives power.

But the elements had been mingled. And their operation according to the ordained laws of the universe could not be stayed. The whole atmosphere was charged, the winds were rising, the clouds and the storm were gathering. A strong hand, a clear eye, a true heart was needed at the helm. From all the people he was chosen. Then the storm broke and the warring waves swept the ship of state for many days and many nights. Shaken to her very keel, dismantled, the vessel, strong and true, rode safely through the storm, and "on the bridge, . . . the Captain . . . Dead."

What does it mean?

The life of freedom was again in the balance. From the cradle of the race she had gone the rounds of the Continents, standing, battling all foes without, true to her principles and her honor, but betrayed within; and driven onward, ever onward, by the greed of men. To the last virgin land she had retreated, there to cleanse and recuperate her powers to roll back the tide, and on to the peaceful possession of the world. The sons of liberty rallied to her standard, fought and died in her defense, and vowed their lives and honor to her service. But her ancient enemy, defeated in the open, followed, in the guise of a friend, to strike her heart.

He unmasked the foe, drove him to the open, defined the issue, and captained the conflict. The perversion of law, in violation of the true relation of the fundamental human rights, which created property in life through the destruction of liberty was uprooted from the national government. The Constitution and laws of the United States were restored to their integrity and their true mission of establishing justice and securing the blessings of liberty to mankind.

But freedom cost. The fundamental principles, the honor, the integrity of the Union cost. The evil of slavery cost money, and it cost blood. Sumter—Bull Run, where raw volunteers skirmished and retreated; Gettysburg, where trained veterans grappled and stayed—twenty-three thousand of the Blue fallen, twenty thousand of the Gray—Vicksburg—Chattanooga. They fought on the mountain tops above the clouds, down in the savannahs, from Atlanta to the sea, and on the sea the fleets of iron. They struggled in the wilderness; around Petersburg and Richmond, then Appomatox. The land was drenched, the rivers ran red, the seas were darkened with blood.

The South was ravaged with fire and sword; the property loss inestimable. Three hundred thousand of her sons were dead.

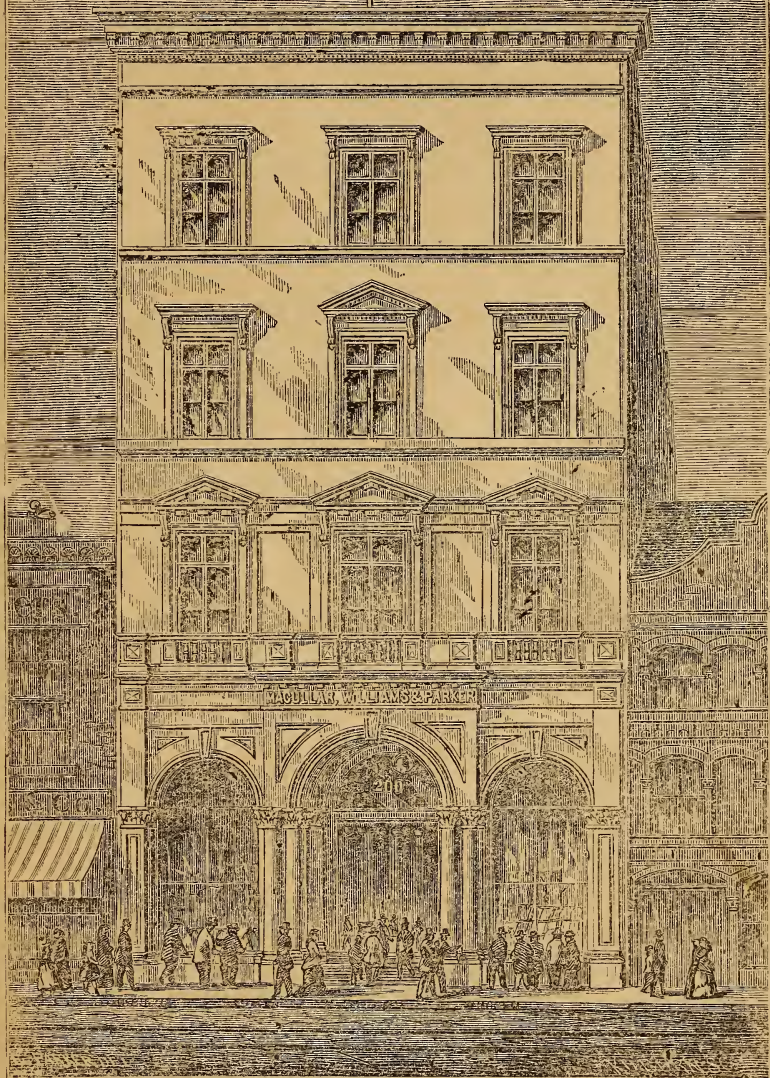
The North had spent thirty-four hundred million dollars. Three hundred and sixty thousand of her sons were dead.

Great principles had been set in battle array by men, and men had paid the cost. Two million six hundred thousand men they marshaled. Six hundred and sixty thousand men were dead.

Independence cost. The Union cost. Freedom cost. It cost blood, and ever will. "There must have been something more than common that those men struggled for . . . something that held out a great promise to all the people of all the world for all time to come."

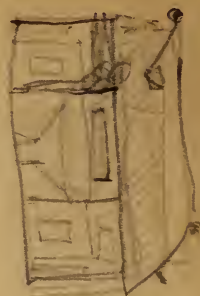
Through it all he rises, over all he towers, the master spirit of the age. In him we understand our history, our purpose, our hope; and, in his death, our mission. A Captain serving the King of Freedom, "a humble instrument in the hands of the Almighty and of this, His most Chosen People"—Abraham Lincoln.

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